

African Americans and Asthma

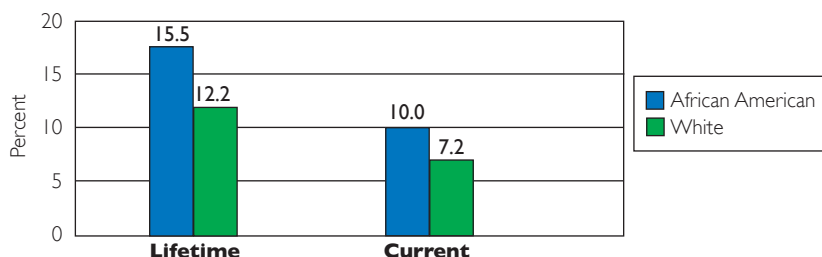
IN NORTH CAROLINA



In 2010, more African American adults than white adults in North Carolina have had a diagnosis of asthma (lifetime asthma) – 15.5% versus 12.2%. The percentages were 14.8% and 13.2% for these two groups in the United States in 2009 (latest data available). Similarly, more African American adults than white adults in North Carolina still currently have asthma (current asthma) – 10.0% versus 7.2% – compared with 9.6% and 8.4% for the two groups in the United States.¹

- In 2009, African Americans had a **mortality rate due to asthma** 2.6 times that for whites: African Americans – 18.0/1,000,000 population; whites – 6.8/1,000,000 population.²
- Among adults, a higher percentage⁺ of African Americans than whites reported having seen a **health professional three or more times for urgent treatment of worsening asthma symptoms** in the past 12 months:³
 - African Americans: 23.3%
 - Whites: 14.7%
- In North Carolina, **65.4% of African American adults had symptoms of asthma that made it difficult to stay asleep**, compared with 47.1% of white adults.³

Adults with Lifetime and Current Asthma, African Americans and Whites, North Carolina, 2010



Source: State Center for Health Statistics, N.C., 2010.

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State of North Carolina
 Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
 Department of Health and Human Services
 Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary
 Division of Public Health
 North Carolina Asthma Program
www.ncdhhs.gov

African American Children (ages 1-17) in North Carolina

- African American children had higher lifetime (ever had) asthma prevalence than white or other minority children: 22.1% vs. 14.6%.⁴ They also had higher current (still have) asthma prevalence than the other two groups: 17.4% vs. 7.4%.⁴
- In 2010, a higher percentage⁺ of African American children (ages 1-17) than white children **reported visits to the emergency department** or urgent care clinic because of their asthma: 35.7% vs. 28.9%.⁴
- More African American children than white children⁺ missed at least one day of day care or school due to their asthma in the past year: 53.8% vs. 40.3%.⁴

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention & Health (2009) (<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/BRFSS/display.asp?cat=AS&yr=2009&qkey=4416&state=NC>). Accessed July 11, 2011.

² Mortality Statistics. State Center for Health Statistics, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (2009). (www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/brfss/2008/nc/all/topics.html#ash). Accessed May 28th, 2009.

³ North Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), State Center for Health Statistics, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (2008). (www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/brfss/2008/nc/all/topics.html#ash). Accessed May 25, 2010.

⁴ North Carolina Child Health Assessment and Monitoring Program (CHAMP), State Center for Health Statistics, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (2010). (www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/champ/2010/topics.html#as). Accessed July 11, 2011.

⁵ Asthma Fact Sheet. (www.betterasthmacare.org/files/AsthmaFactSheet_V5_102909.pdf). Accessed December 21, 2009.

⁺ The 95% confidence intervals for the groups' percentages in these comparisons overlap; therefore, no statistical difference between these groups should be assumed.

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For more information, please visit the
NC Asthma Program's website
at **www.asthma.ncdhhs.gov** or call the
Asthma Program at **(919) 707-5213**
for additional assistance.



10 Key Tips for Controlling and Self-Managing Your Asthma⁵

1. Plan to see your doctor for an asthma appointment – at least every 6 months, even if you think your asthma is under control.
2. Know when and how to correctly use your asthma medicines.
3. Always use a holding chamber (or spacer) with your metered dose inhaler.
4. Make sure you always have access to your asthma medicines.
5. Get a **written asthma action plan** from your doctor. Make sure you understand it and have it updated at least every year. **In 2008, 68.3% of N.C. adults did not obtain an asthma management plan from their doctor.**³
6. Know what triggers your asthma and how to avoid your triggers.
7. Ask your doctor about tests to determine if you have allergies to specific triggers.
8. Always avoid exposure to tobacco smoke.
9. Ask your doctor about testing your lung function (spirometry) at least every 1-2 years.
10. Be sure you get a flu shot (vaccine) every year (available in the fall season).